

Expert Advice for Namibian Table Grape Exporters

Namibian grape production firms such as Nagrapex Holdings, Ltd., export more than 2,000 tons of table grapes annually, mostly to Europe. Nagrapex is aggressively looking for new markets, including the United States. All potential new imports of fresh fruits and vegetables must be evaluated to ensure that the risk of introducing exotic pests and diseases is properly managed. This evaluation, called a pest risk assessment (PRA), is quite complex and can take years, particularly in an instance like this, where there is limited pest information. Fortunately, USAID-funded experts at the Southern African Global Competitiveness Hub are working with Nagrapex and Namibian plant health officials to gather the necessary information to complete the PRA and address all the relevant regulatory requirements.

The potential benefit to grape exports of the PRA is significant. It is estimated that the industry will employ 4,000 permanent and 2,600 part-time workers, creating jobs in a part of Namibia that has few employment opportunities. Through AGOA, USAID is working to add the United States to the list of potential markets for Nagrapex and other Namibian grape producers.